



The Factor of Afghanistan in the Foreign Policy Strategy of Uzbekistan

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Abstract: Afghanistan is a country of strategic importance for Uzbekistan, where Uzbekistan has both political and trade-economic interests. Taking into account that Afghanistan is a close and large market for Uzbekistan, attention is being paid to the issue of export in our country. Uzbekistan's developed industry, transport and energy potential, agricultural products are also beneficial for Afghanistan. In addition, the government of Uzbekistan pays special attention to establishing peace, stability and good neighborly relations with this country from the point of view of security. Diplomatic relations between Uzbekistan and Afghanistan were established on October 13, 1992. By 2016, bilateral cooperation began to develop steadily. In January 2017, the first round of political consultations between the foreign ministries of the two countries took place in Tashkent. The appointment of the special representative of the President of the Republic of Uzbekistan on Afghanistan was an example of the high attention our country pays to bilateral relations.

Keywords: Taliban, the Termiz-Mazari-Sharif-Kabul-Karachi Trans-Asian railway, Central Asia, C5+1, a new foreign policy strategy, political realism.

Afghanistan is an urgent problem that requires an alternative solution for a long time and is much bigger than other problems that have been neglected. According to the representative of the Institute of Strategic and Regional Studies of the Republic of Uzbekistan, the policy of isolating the Taliban movement in the 1990s shows that it was not justified. According to the expert, the situation and the experience of previous years require the continuation of constructive dialogue with the new government of Afghanistan. Based on such an approach, it is believed that the new government will be transformed into a power that strives to live peacefully with its neighbors without denying the laws of the international community. It should be noted that the Uzbek government has been negotiating with the Taliban for a long time, and the withdrawal of US troops has accelerated this process. In recent years, President Shavkat Mirziyoyev has developed a new foreign policy strategy related to this issue, which has several directions:

Direction 1: development of good neighborly relations, establishment of peace and stability and further strengthening of comprehensive cooperation in Central Asia;

Direction 2: strengthening interdependence in Central Asia and South Asia;

Direction 3: It consists in making efforts to establish peace and stability in Afghanistan.

All of the above directions serve to create a long-term strategy of Uzbekistan's policy in the region.

Such a policy by Uzbekistan gives certain results. Regarding the situation and processes in Afghanistan, the position and implementation of the policy of Uzbekistan can be included in the theory of full-fledged political realism. In addition, such a position is held not only by Uzbekistan, but also by Russia, Belarus, China, Pakistan, India, Iran, the UAE, Kazakhstan, Turkmenistan, Kyrgyzstan and a

number of other countries. This is evidenced by the assurances given by the Taliban-led government to the Uzbek government regarding security, the restoration and beautification of the mausoleums of great figures of the Uzbek people, the proof of economic and social projects, including the Termiz-Mazari-Sharif-Kabul-Karachi Trans-Asian railway. The project can be seen in preparation for rapid continuation.

Uzbekistan has been consistently supporting all practical initiatives aimed at establishing peace and tranquility in Afghanistan. Our country firmly believes that the most correct way to establish peace and stability in Afghanistan is to conduct political negotiations. It is important to achieve national reconciliation, relying on the financial, economic and humanitarian support of partner countries and organizations, and with the active participation of the United Nations.

During Shavkat Mirziyoyev's time, Central Asia became one of the most priority areas of Uzbekistan's foreign policy, which is logical from the point of view of both security and economy. The countries of Central Asia are natural partners of Uzbekistan, which determined both geographical and common historical destiny. The launch of the advisory council of the heads of state of the Central Asian countries serves as an indicator of the development of common visions for the solution of the most important problems in the region and the launch of projects that ensure mutual growth. As proof of this, it is possible to cite the consultative meeting of the heads of state of the Central Asian countries, which took place on July 21 of this year in Chulponota, Kyrgyzstan. At this meeting, the issues of strengthening cooperation in taking joint measures against modern risks and threats to regional security, the prospects of expanding regional partnership in order to ensure stable economic growth of the Central Asian countries, and to continue active cultural and humanitarian exchanges were discussed. It was also noted that the continuation of close cooperation in the issues of helping to ensure long-term peace in Afghanistan and its socio-economic recovery should remain the most important priority for us. It was added that the countries of the region, as the closest neighbors of this country, should first of all be interested in its stability. It was noted that it is important to actively develop trade relations with this country, involve it in economic processes in the region, expand humanitarian aid to the Afghan people, and promote important social and infrastructural projects.

On July 15-16, 2021, at the C5+1 meeting in Tashkent, "Central and South Asia: regional interdependence. A joint statement was adopted on the results of the "Threats and Opportunities" conference. It reads: "Creating a stable and conducive environment conducive to a peaceful resolution of the situation in Afghanistan, including reminding all parties to: Urgently pursue negotiations with a clear objective of a political settlement." start with; that the only way to a just and lasting peace is a negotiated political settlement and an inclusive political system that respects the fundamental rights of all Afghans; that no one supports the use of force to install the new government in Afghanistan; It is absolutely impossible to allow terrorists and third-party forces to use the territory of Afghanistan to threaten or attack C5+1 member countries or any other country. The 5 countries of the region that signed this statement must follow the position stated in it.

In conclusion, it should be noted that Uzbekistan has determined its priorities in Afghanistan after America. These directions reflect not only the interests of Uzbekistan, but also conform to international standards and the interests of the civilian population of Afghanistan. Such a position allows solving several tasks at once, and it also means that the interests of Uzbekistan should prevail in any situation, and it is appropriate for the country to conduct policy based on the concept of political realism. The successful implementation of the planned large-scale infrastructure projects crossing Afghanistan to South Asia needs stable, credible and predictable governance in the country. Therefore, the current dead-end status quo in Afghanistan should be broken and the international community should support the formation of new inclusive Afghan government capable to provide security and resilient development.

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